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Official Minutes Eighty-second Session Maryland Annual Conference

OF THE

Methodist Protestant Church

HELD AT

Broadway Church,

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OBITUARIES

Rev. John Bayley Jones.

Rev. John Bayley Jones was born December 5, 1833, in the vicinity of Milton, Delaware. His parents were James Wilson Jones and Elizabeth Daroma Blockson. "No man," he was used to say, "ever had a better parentage, or a more substantial ancestry." He spent a happy childhood on the home farm, imbibing a life-lasting love of books and of all living things. He was educated in the academies of Milton and Laurel. While subsequently engaged in teaching, he became convinced that, for the sake of the young under his care, he should be a Christian man. He was happily converted under the ministry of the Rev. T. A. Moore. He soon heard the divine call to preach the Gospel by which he had been saved, and studied theology under the direction of Rev. Mr. Wright, of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Lewes, Delaware. He was admitted to the Maryland Conference in 1860, and ordained in 1862. For six years he served as an associate pastor. Among the many churches of which he had charge were Alexandria, Salem, Montgomery, Alabama; Chestertown and East Baltimore; Laurel and St. Luke's. Under his pastorate, Chestertown was visited with one of the most remarkable revivals that has ever occurred in the history of our church. His ministry covered forty-eight years of unbroken activity.

Those who have been associated with him the closest, will appreciate how difficult it is, to give that just portrayal of the man he deserves on the memorial records of the church. To the writer, the simplicity of his convictions with regard to the religious experiences emphasized by Methodism, seems his most remarkable trait. He was infatuated with Carlyle; Swedenborg's mystic dreams fascinated him; but speculative as his mind was in its bent, various as was his reading, and much as times and manners have changed, he was always the fiery evangelist of the revival meeting. Rejoicing himself in conscious personal salvation, with burning earnestness, he persuaded sinners to humble themselves at the mourner's bench, and struggle, through prayer and faith, into the knowledge of forgiveness of sins.

Always discursive, often obscure, yet when he struck the evangelical note; when the conviction and conversion of the unsaved, or discussion of the spiritual and practical, rather than the abstract phases of the Christian life moved him, he was an exceptionally powerful preacher; vehement, enkindling, tender and persuasive. And yet it was most because they honor-

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ed the man, those whom he served loved so well to hear him. A quaintness and whimsicality, altogether his own, made him interesting; his transparent sincerity, the purity and uprightness of his character, and his intense human sympathies, won affection and respect. He was positive in his convictions, and so frank and even severe in their expression as often to be misunderstood; he was an idealist, and impatient, when others, to get things done, set his ideals aside; but there beat in his breast a kind, generous and gentle heart. No man was ever, as a guest, a more courtly gentleman; or as a companion, more genial; and he had, in full measure, that rare accomplishment of a pastor, the secret of fellowship with the poor, the unfortunate and the suffering. A unique and active mentality, but far more, the spirit and habit of communion with God which he assidiously cultivated; the tender, eager affectionateness of his domestic life; and the consolations of God he had known when sorrow swept its seas over his breaking heart, threw about the man an impalpable aura that made you love him not knowing why.

He was a far more than ordinary man, yet with a fetter on him, "an ambassador in a chain;" one scarcely knows how, unless it was that he was so elemental, so much a child-man, so unworldly wise. He felt it, perhaps misunderstood it; 'he was pained and disappointed to be held back from spheres to which he knew his abilities were equal, but none the less, he stooped, in consecration, to the lowliest works his hands found to do, with an industry, fidelity, and zeal that never spared himself. He was a pious, laborious servant of Jesus; a studious, burning light-bearing preacher of His Word; and a loyal, devoted and fruitful minister of His church. So deeply was his heart still immersed in his "loved employ," he could not credit the approach of death; pathetically insisting he had still years of service in him. "I always found him trusting in God and abiding in His love," says the minister most often with him in the closing days. At "twilight and evening bell," on the 12th of October, the tide, "which drew from out the deep, turned to its earliest home," and he passed on its ebb, "too full for sound or form," to the better fellowship, the more abundant service, and the perfect rapture of the church beyond the mortal veil. Impressive services, conducted by the president of the Conference, in the presence of a great company of his brethren, were held in Brooklyn, his last charge, and his body, borne to Laurel, was inhumed beside the wife of his youth. "The good and faithful servant" has heard his Lord's "well done," and in our hearts, there is the sound of a great Amen.

D. L. GREENFIELD, J. W. GRAY, J. W. TROUT, JAMES McCAULEY, C. J. STOLL, JOHN ELLIOTT. alon of a

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